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# THE YOUTH'S REALM

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FOR YOUNG AND OLD

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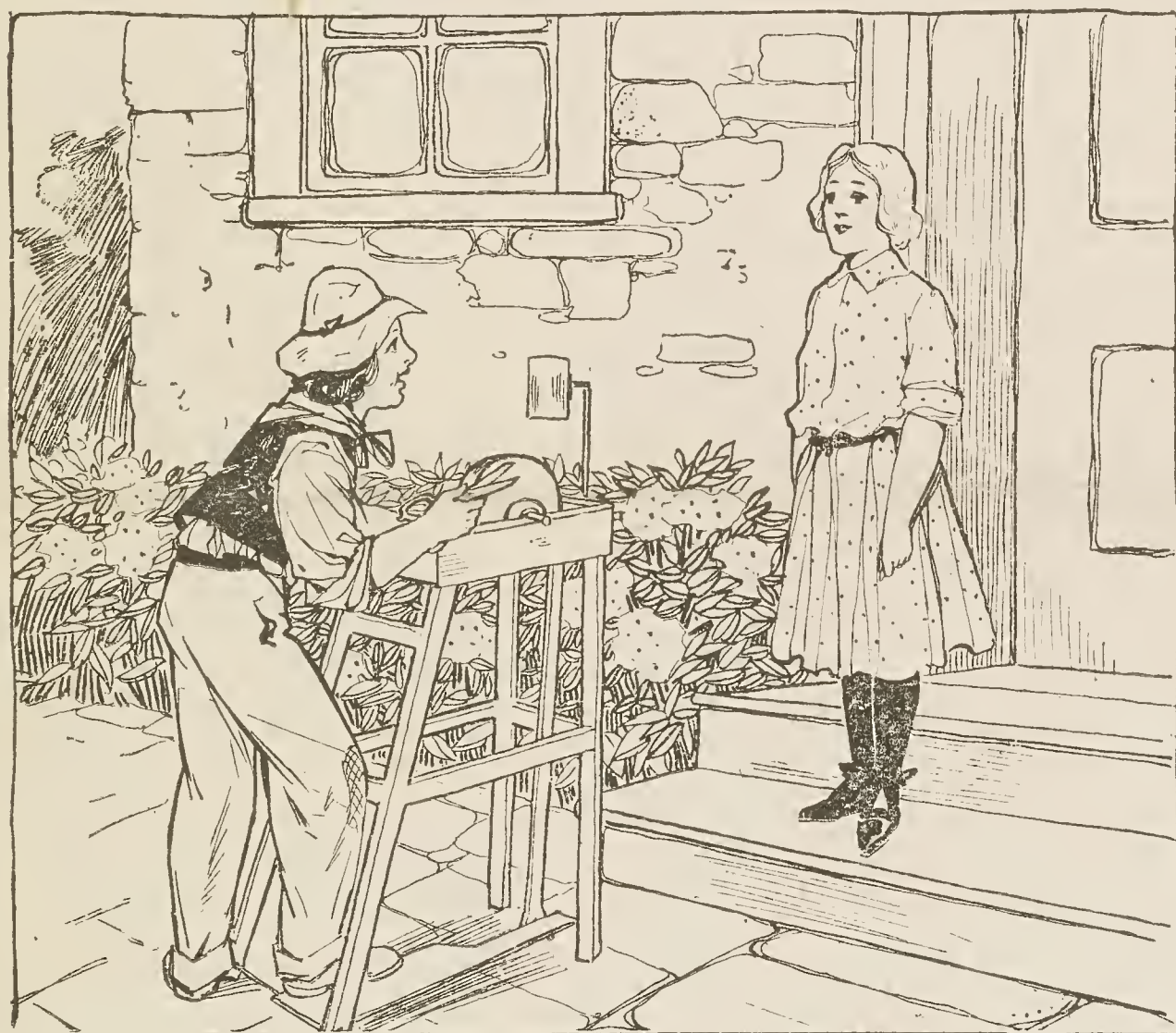
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## How Jessie Went to the Circus



THE BOY SET TO WORK WITH HIS WHEEL.

JESSIE stood over the kitchen sink busily washing the breakfast dishes and sighing as she did so, for it was monotonous work.

"Oh, dear," she grumbled, "I just wish I had all my time to myself during vacation the way the other girls do. Dishes are fearfully tiresome."

Just then a scissors grinder coming along the street called, "Scissors to grind; scissors to grind," in a very pleasant voice. Jessie went to the door as he knocked and said very politely, "No, thank you, we haven't any dull scissors today."

The grinder was a young Italian boy, and he looked so tired and forlorn that Jessie stood by the door a moment and looked at him pityingly.

"Are you tired?" she asked pleasantly. "It's such a hot day, perhaps you would like a glass of ice water."

"Tanka," said the boy, showing his white teeth as Jessie handed it to him. "Vera sorra you got no scissor to grind," continued he, "not one pair dis week. Vera discouraged." And he picked up his machine and started down the steps.

"Poor thing," thought the little girl to herself, "I'm awfully sorry for him.

I'd give him the money in a moment if I had it." Then the thought flashed over her that she did have it—a nice new ten cent piece up in her top bureau drawer that Uncle Frank had given her only the day before. "Oh, dear, I simply can't give that up. It's all I have." Then, as she caught a glimpse of the poor downhearted Italian boy walking slowly down the walk, all her sympathy was aroused and her decision was made.

"Boy," she called out, "come back a moment. I have a pair after all," and charitable little Jessie ran upstairs and came down with her mother's shears and her one and only ten cent piece.

The boy had come back; his face was all smiles as he set to work, and in a few moments the shears were beautifully sharpened.

"Goodby," he called as he started down the walk the second time. "You verra kind lady."

"Goodby," answered Jessie, and she went back to her dishes.

About two months after this every fence in the village announced the fact by flaring posters that the circus was coming to town. This instantly created wild excitement among all the

children. Everybody but poor Jessie seemed to be going, and so she tried not to see the enchanting billboards and pretended that lions and tigers weren't a bit interesting to her. Mother had said from the first that it would be impossible for her to spare the necessary quarter for admission, for little Harry needed shoes and baby Josie's hat was worn out. But mother promised that next time it came they should all go, so Jessie was trying to look forward to that and not think of what she was missing. It was hard work, though, and the prospect of pleasure a year ahead was not much comfort.

And then finally the circus came. There was no reason for Jessie's missing the parade anyway; so, seizing little Harry's hand, she started for the village and stood in open mouthed wonder as the chariots and clowns and elephants marched grandly and majestically along. And the horses! Jessie had never seen such beautiful creatures in all her life. "Oh, dear, oh, dear, just to think I can't see them perform at all," she almost sobbed.

Suddenly the procession stopped. A freight train was slowly putting into the station and the gates went down and prevented anything passing. This pleased Jessie immensely, for she had all the more time to look at the wonderful creatures before her. And whom do you think she saw standing directly in front of her, leading a tiny trick poodle? The little Italian scissors grinder himself.

"Why, there's my scissors grinder," cried Jessie aloud.

At the sound of her voice the boy turned and instantly recognized his small friend. "Hello," he called, and then stepped over to where she stood. "I never forget you. Do you go circus today?"

"No," said Jessie mournfully, "we are just watching the parade."

"Nicer to see show," said the boy. "Better come. I join a month ago. Have good luck ever since. Scissor business no good."

"That's nice," said Jessie. "I wish I could come, but we can't afford it," she ended, turning red.

The boy smiled broadly. "I give back your kindness, lady," he said; "you and little boy come to circus, ask for Tony, and I come let you in free." Just then, with an extra blast of trumpets, the parade started, and Jessie had only time to gasp out "thank you" before he was gone.

It seemed just too good to be true. "Do think, mother, I am really going to the circus after all, and Harry too! Oh, I can't believe it—I can't believe it!"

But it was true, and that afternoon Jessie and Harry presented themselves at the wonderful circus tent and falteringly asked for Tony. In about two minutes he came out and escorted the two happiest children in town to

their seats right in front of the middle ring. I never could pretend to tell you all the things they saw, for it would be impossible, but, oh, they had such a good time!

## Heroism of a Boer Boy

Major Seely of the British army tells a pathetic story of a little Boer lad who preferred to die rather than give any information likely to result in the capture of his fellow countrymen.

On one occasion during the war Major Seely said he was instructed to get some volunteers and try to capture a commandant at a farmhouse some twenty miles away. He got the men ready and they set out. It was a rather desperate enterprise, but they got to the farmhouse all right, only to find, however, that the elusive Boer had cleared out in an unknown direction.

It was vitally important that the British force should get some information, for it became a question perhaps of the Boers catching them and not they catching the Boer commandant. At the farmhouse they saw a good looking Boer boy and some yeomen. Major Seely asked the boy if the commandant had been there, and he said in Dutch, taken by surprise, "Yes."

"Where has he gone?" was the next question, and the boy became suspicious and answered, "I do not know."

"I decided then," continued Major Seely, "to do a thing for which I hope I may be forgiven, because my men's lives were in danger. I threatened the boy with death if he would not disclose the whereabouts of the general. He still refused, and I put him against a wall and said I would have him shot. At the same time I whispered to my men, 'For heaven's sake, don't shoot.'"

"The boy still refused, although I could see he believed I was going to have him shot. I ordered the men to present. Every rifle was leveled at the boy. 'Now,' I said, 'before I give the word, which way has the general gone?'"

"I remember the look in the boy's face—a look such as I have never seen before but once. He was transfigured before me. Something greater almost than anything human shone from his eyes. He threw back his head and said in Dutch, 'I will not say.' There was nothing for it," continued the major, "but to shake hands with the boy and go away."

"Papa," said Harry, "who was George Washington?"

"George Washington was the Father of His Country, my boy."

"Well, who's this Uncle Sam they talk about? Was he Washington's brother?"



# The Very Short Memory of Mr. Joseph Scorer

By  
JOHN OXENHAM

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## CHAPTER I.

**C**OULD it, after all, be called unique? Hardly, perhaps, in the strict sense of the word, since others shared in it. But to us it was, and I trust ever will be, a unique experience.

We have generally spent our August holidays at the seaside in apartments and suffered many things in consequence. And so, after mature consideration of ways and means, we decided this year to attain to the dignity of a small furnished house, or a cottage at all events, if by any chance such could be found within the limits of a moderate purse.

Further consideration fixed on Eastnor as the place where our holiday was to be spent.

We had, in the course of twelve years' wanderings, tried most of the south and east coast watering places and found most of them wanting. If the atmosphere was bracing, the beach was shingle. If the beach was sandy, the atmosphere was enervating.

So to Eastnor I journeyed with a Saturday to Monday ticket and stringent orders from headquarters to first try the sand as to quality, quantity, texture, depth and pools, and if up to standard measurement I was authorized to pick up a small house for August on the most reasonable terms obtainable.

The requirements were at least one sitting room and three bedrooms and a kitchen—if an extra room or two without extra charge, so much the better. I was to come back fully informed as to what was left in the house in the way of furnishings and utensils and what we would be expected to take with us.

I found Eastnor all right as regards sand. The very streets were full of it, and as I stood on the esplanade at low tide and leaned up against a strong southwest breeze and saw the dry sand sweeping like smoke along the flats and piling knee deep to windward of the groins and got my mouth and eyes and ears full of it I decided, from the taste and smell and feel of it, that, from a sand point of view, at all events, Eastnor would do.

Now to find a lodgment for the night and then to prowling round for a house.

I struck a neat little confectioner's for tea and, following a plan which had acted well on previous occasions, asked, as I was paying for it, if they could accommodate me for the night.

Well, they had rooms, but they were let for the following week, being regatta week. "Yes," said the stout lady behind the counter, "I think I had better not take you, but the Balaklava inn next door puts up beds. You had better try there."

Yes, at the Balaklava they put up beds, and they showed me to a room, but "if I should get a good let tomorrow—lots of folks come down on Sunday to stop for regatta"—said the hostess, "I shall have to turn you out. But maybe I can find you a bedroom nigh handy."

Then I turned out to find the desira-

ble seaside residence with the maximum of accommodation and comfort at the minimum of cost.

I rummaged round till I struck the chief estate agent, who was also chief grocer of the town.

A dapper London trained young shopman smoothed down his ruffled front hair and leaned over the counter and asked, "And what can I do for you, sir?"

"I want a small furnished house," I said meekly.

"Ah," he said with a grin, "I'm afraid we are out of them at present. I'll ask Mr. Wilson."

"Small furnished house for August?" echoed Mr. Wilson in aggrieved amazement. "Not such a thing to be had in Eastnor. All let a month ago. You should come in May or June to get a house for August."

I thanked him and left depressed. I wandered through the town and found myself back on the esplanade. I walked the whole length of it and then along the sea bank into the uninhabited region beyond.

Not quite uninhabited as it proved, for about half a mile from the esplanade I came suddenly on a cottage with nothing between it and the sandy beach but a tiny garden plot, with a bit of grass and some nasturtiums and pinks mixed up with cabbages and potatoes and a row of scarlet runners. It looked very clean and inviting, and I said to myself, "Now, if only that were to let, it's just exactly what I want."

There could be no harm in asking, so I went up to the door and knocked. No one came. I knocked again. Still no answer. I waited. It seemed to me there was some movement in the side room, the sliding window of which was partly open, but was covered with a white curtain.

I knocked again, and the door opened suddenly and disclosed the small brown face of a small lame man, looking up at me with a pair of small but very sharp brown eyes, with, as I now remember, a slightly startled look in them, as of one caught in the act.

"Yes?" he said in a sharp voice.

"Oh, I wanted to ask if this cottage

is by any chance to let any time in August."

He hesitated, and then he snapped:

"How long for?"

"Two, three or four weeks."

"When d'you want it?"

"About the 7th or 8th."

He pondered the matter and then barked:

"Come in."

I went in. It was charming, nicely though plainly furnished and as clean as a new pin. I went all over it.

"And the rent?" I asked, wondering how much above my limit I would not go to possess all this for a month.

"Well," he said slowly, "three guineas a week is what we generally get."

Diplomatically veiling my satisfaction, I closed the bargain on the spot and sat down then and there and wrote out a couple of agreements by which

Joseph Scorer agreed to let and John Oxenham agreed to take for one month from Aug. 12 the cottage known as Sandybank cottage, in the town of Eastnor, with the furniture, etc., named in the inventory attached, for the sum of 12 guineas, whereof the receipt of £1 was hereby acknowledged.

"What about the inventory?" I asked.

It was a strange and wonderful document, that inventory, but with Mr. Scorer's assistance I succeeded in checking the main points of it. Many of the items were strange, the spelling was phonetic and curious and at times stumped us both, and then Mr. Scorer would scratch his head and opine that it must mean so and so.

"I cundler" in the kitchen brought us to a deadlock for full five minutes. At last Mr. Scorer pointed to a battered implement with its bottom full of holes hanging on the wall and said triumphantly, "That's it."

"What in heaven's name is it?" I asked, gazing suspiciously at the shapeless object.

"Why, you squeegee your cabbages through it," he said.

"Oh, I see—a colander."

The larger articles, such as bedsteads and chairs and washstands, we easily identified, and these we triumphantly ticked off first and then gradually worried out the smaller ones.

"I indinat" caused us some trouble in the best bedroom, but finally a strip of straw matting two feet by one was hauled out from its lurking place under the washstand, whither it had crept for concealment, and reluctantly answered to its name.

The crockery was heterogeneous and was slumped under color headings.

"Three cupps pink; one sosir pink; three cupps blew; four sosirs blew (one crack)," and so on.

That searching inventory went right to the root of things and by its candor impressed me most favorably with the stark, staring, straightforward honesty of Mr. Joseph Scorer.

"One bird in glass case, bird's leg broke—four ornaments, all crack—one ornulu clock (won't go)." Could transparent honesty go further than this?

Moreover, Mr. Scorer asked me casually, "Did I know Mr. William Henry Sawyer, Esq., of the 'ome office?"

I did not. My acquaintance does not as a rule extend to the home office.

"A nice gentleman, 'e is. Been 'ere in this 'ouse every year of the last five years. 'E comes early, about May, and sometimes again in October."

"It is good to be Mr. William Henry Sawyer, Esq., of the home office," I said. I am a fairly truthful man as men go, and I never spoke a truer word than that, but that knowledge only came to me later.

Aug. 12 found us duly landed at Eastnor station and furtively raking out our belongings from the piles of other people's. At last they were all collected, and I chartered a carriage and a porter's cart to convey us and our luggage to Sandybank cottage.

Mr. Joseph Scorer met us at the door, and we forthwith took possession. The kitchen fire was lighted, the coal was there, and the milk, and the bread, and the oil.

Everything was as nice as it could be.

The luggage was carried in, and we settled down to a month's solid enjoyment and undisputed possession of our new abode.

Mr. Scorer was solicitous of our comfort. He altered the inventory in one or two minor points, in respect of articles broken by our predecessors. He dug enough potatoes for next week's dinners and cut two plump cabbages. He collected half the balance of the rent and departed, followed by the blessings of the entire family, save those members who were already knee deep in the ocean just the other side

of the garden patch.

"This is simply splendid," said my wife, beaming at me in the way I like. "It seems too good to be true."

She was right.

Next morning was magnificent. My wife went out to buy up the town. All the rest of us plunged into the sea except the servant, Amelia Blatt, who was rapidly converting herself into a hegress over the strange little range in the kitchen.

One of the advantages of Sandybank cottage was that from its proximity to the beach you could see your bedroom

as a bathing house, assume your suit therein, skip across the lawn and be into the water with a hop and a jump.

We all had a glorious bathe and a scamper on the sands and then trooped up to the cottage to dress. As we came up over the lawn I was surprised to see a great heap of luggage and two bicycles lying around, evidently all just discharged from a couple of retreating carriages.

I am an unusually modest man, and it was rather overfacing. There were several ladies in the party and an elderly gentleman. They all turned and watched our advent. The ladies looked put out at something. I feared it might be at myself in my bathing costume. However, my foot was on my native heath, so to speak, which was more than could be said of theirs, so I put on as bold a face as could legitimately be expected of a modest man in nothing but a bathing costume and went forward. The old gentleman also seemed disturbed, but he disguised his feelings to the best of his power and addressed me suavely:

"Been enjoying a last bathe?" he asked.

There was just a hint of "What the deuce do you mean by it, sir?" in his tone.

"I beg your pardon?" I said.

"Couldn't refrain from one more dip, I suppose?" he said again with a forced smile. "Might I ask what time you are leaving? We understood"—

"Leaving?" I said, with some force. "Why, we only got here yesterday!"

## CHAPTER II.

**H**E gazed at me in blank astonishment—the ladies also.

"Oh," he said soothingly, "there must be some mistake."

"I am not aware of any," I answered somewhat brusquely.

It was ludicrous, standing there in a bathing suit discussing the matter under the gaze of three pairs of outraged female eyes and a blazing sun.

"But, my good sir," said the old gentleman, "I have taken this cottage. It is Sandybank cottage, is it not?" he asked.

"It is."

"Mr. Joseph Scorer's?"

"Yes."

I was getting angry, and the sun was blistering my neck.

"Well, I have taken it for four weeks from Aug. 13 and have paid a deposit on it."

"And I have taken it for four weeks from Aug. 12 and have paid a deposit and half the rent," I said. "We came in yesterday, and we go out Sept. 9."

"And you have an agreement with Mr. Scorer?"

"Certainly I have, but I have not got it on me."

The old gentleman, very red in the face, turned to his women folk.

"My dears, there is evidently some mistake, but this gentleman is doubtless not to blame. Would you mind my seeing your agreement?" he asked, turning again to me.

"Certainly I would mind. My agreement has nothing to do with you, sir, and I am not in the habit of having my word doubted. Now perhaps you will



permit me to go in and dress before my neck is absolutely raw."

They hung around for a time, talking unpleasantly among themselves, and finally the old gentleman stalked off to the town and came back with a cart for their belongings. They were loaded up, and the party disappeared in a cloud of dust on the way to Eastnor.

"That is rather a curious thing," said my wife when I detailed the experiences of the morning to her on her return from her shopping. "I hope"—

"Oh, we're all right," I said. "They won't put us out. Possession, you know"—

"Yes, I know. I wasn't thinking of that," she said, with a faraway look in her eyes.

By evening the raw edge of the annoyance of the morning had worn off.

Next day after a morning bath and paddle on the sands and an early dinner we started for a long afternoon's ramble round Eastnor to get some idea of the place, leaving the two youngest children with the servant, with strict injunctions not to get drowned and to get their tea whenever they felt like it.

We did Eastnor thoroughly, and then, noticing that there was a concert on the pier that night, my wife suggested tea at a confectioner's and an adjournment to the pier afterward for the concert. This was carried with acclaim.

We enjoyed the tea, the concert and the stroll home and arrived at Sandybank cottage about 10 o'clock, fully satisfied with our day's outing.

Amelia met us at the door. She was in a state of extreme nervous excitement.

"Thank 'eaven, you come 'ome!" she burst out.

She was unfortunate in the place of her birth and upbringing, was Amelia. To judge from her accent, she must have been born right up in the steeple of Bow church. Otherwise she was a sterling girl. I will tone down her vernacular. It does not spell easily.

"Sich a dye I never had. Seems to me we'd better git away 'ome's quick's we can," she began.

"Why, Amelia, what's the matter?" asked her mistress.

"Matter!" said Amelia, with rising inflection. "Well, there's been a party of three old maiden ladies, with three dawgs and two kinnaries and a parrick in a cage, all a-settin' cryin' on their boxes outside here all day long since half an hour after yon left, awaitin' for you to come back and go out of this 'ouse and let 'em come in. They say they took it from Aug. 14 for a month, and paid a-deeposit, and they was to come in today.

"I just told 'em straight that we was 'ere for a month, and there must be some mistake, seein' as we wasn't agoin' out till our time was up, and then they just set down and cried, and the parrick swore awful till they covered him up. He belonged to a newew what was a sailor man, they said, when he began to swear, and I told the children to run inside lest they'd catch it. Then they was so mis'rabable settin' there, dabbin' of their poor little red noses, that I made 'em some tea, and they could 'ave kissed me, and they wanted me to take pay for it, but I wouldn't."

"You're a good girl, Amelia, and you did quite right," said her mistress, and turning to me: "This is really very trying and very uncomfortable. What do you suppose is the meaning of it?"

She looked a little bit as though she thought it was my fault.

"I don't know what's the meaning of it," I said, feeling angry. "I'm afraid Mr. Joseph Scorer has a very short memory. If I had him here I'd try if screwing his neck round would lengthen it."

Next day being Sunday we had a

genuine day of rest and enjoyed it with quite a novel sense of freedom from the cares and worries of life.

On Monday, by the morning train and the station omnibus, arrived a family much like our own—father, mother, four children, servant and innumerable boxes.

I had had my bath and was sitting on the porch, armed with a pipe and my stamped agreement with Mr. Scorer, prepared to repel all intruders. So before the grinning omnibus man had time to dump down the baggage I took the father to one side, showed him my agreement and explained the situation, telling him his was the third party I had had to turn empty away.

He was very wrath and swore, I should say, as lustily as the old maid's nephew's parrot could have done. He was a lawyer, too, and wanted to go into the legal aspects of the case. I assured him that they did not interest me unless I had some ground of action against Mr. Joseph Scorer for the disturbance of my peaceful possession of his much let habitation.

He was a good fellow on the whole, and he left me his name and business address and made me promise to let him know if I ever found out where Mr. Scorer had gone, and also to refer to him any of the outraged claimants to the cottage who wished to take legal action in the matter.

His wife and youngsters had been peering out anxiously at us from the back windows of the bus while this colloquy was taking place. The father explained the matter to them, and with a wave of his hand to me they drove back crestfallen to Eastnor.

On Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday variously composed parties arrived with their baggage, and I turned them all away and sent them to find lodgings in Eastnor, suffering much in the doing of it from their not unnatural ill humor and chagrin.

On Saturday there arrived a rollicking reading party of students from Oxford with a coach. I explained my painful situation and experiences and informed them that they made the eighth party I had had to repulse.

They were merry, good humored fellows, and they lay flat on my patch of lawn and fairly screamed with delight at the cuteness of Mr. Joseph Scorer. "He was born an Oxford gyp," they averred.

They enjoyed the affair so much that I could hardly get rid of them. My wife gave them tea and cakes, and they sat and smoked and laughed and joked till the stars were up, and then they got a carriage and drove off to the hotel, after promising to come up every day about noon to assist me in my hateful task of holding the fort against all comers.

And they did it, too, and enjoyed it immensely.

On the pier, on Sunday morning after church, we met at intervals all the families who ought to have been stopping in Sandybank cottage.

The irate first old gentleman stopped me to ask: "Well, how are you getting on? Say, that was the nastiest trick I ever was served. If I could find Mr. Scorer I would jolly well like to wring his nasty little neck."

I said I felt that way myself, but I feared there was not much chance of laying hands on him.

I told him I had now had to send away eight different parties, who all claimed the cottage, and at that he felt very much better.

My lawyer friend was just passing, and I introduced him to the old gentleman, and, catching sight of my young friends from Oxford, I introduced them all to one another, and they all had a lively time together.

On Monday I bethought me to go to the station and acquaint the cabmen

with the true state of matters and beg them not to bring any more parties to Sandybank cottage. They listened with broad grins to all I had to say, but absolutely refused to comply with my wishes. It all meant double fares for them, and all was grist that came to their mills.

That day two separate parties arrived within ten minutes of one another. The Oxford contingent was sitting on the lawn and reveled in the disgust of the heads of the families when they were made acquainted with the state of affairs.

Paterfamilias number two, who I think from his manners must have been a performing strong man, threatened to pitch me and my belongings bodily into the sea. Young Oxford, however, came to the rescue, and Mr. Strong Man and family eventually retired amid the hootings of the crowd.

For the curious situation of matters at Sandybank cottage could no longer be hidden under a bushel. The news had got abroad, and numbers of people came up each day now and sat round our house to enjoy the fun. In fact, we had become one of the centers of attraction of Eastnor.

Perhaps the funniest thing was to see the three old maiden ladies come straggling every day in single file, each with a wheezy, waddling pug dog in a lead, which was fastened around its body lest undue pressure on its neck should induce the inevitable apoplectic fit a day sooner than was assigned for it. They came panting up and gazed mournfully at the cottage and reproachfully at me whenever I appeared, and they looked sadly at the gradually disappearing supply of potatoes and cabbages for which they had paid and which I was eating, for Mr. Joseph Scorer had sold and been paid for that garden produce no less than sixteen times over. It needs a genius of that kind to run a garden profitably.

In the natural course of things the local paper gave a humorous account of the affair, which was copied into one of the London dailies, and this it was that eventually brought about the climax.

By Saturday night we had repelled sixteen different attempts on our tenancy of Sandybank cottage, and by this time if a single day, except Sunday, had passed without the arrival of one or more claimants we would have begun to suspect something had gone wrong.

There was one thing, however, that puzzled me exceedingly, and no amount of thoughtful consideration of the subject cast any light upon it. What on earth had made Mr. Joseph Scorer act in this way? If he had let the cottage in the usual manner, he could have made at least £22 or £23 all told in the two months. As it was, I reckoned he had made about £37 by his monstrous duplicity, and it was the utter inadequacy of the plunder which puzzled me so much. Why would a man want to hang sixteen indictments for fraud around his neck for such a very small reward? It seemed inconceivable, especially in such a smart and farseeing man as Mr. Joseph Scorer. It was the action of a fool, and, whatever else he was, Mr. Joseph Scorer could hardly be called a fool, except in this one point of utter inadequacy of motive.

However, my eyes were to be opened and in a somewhat unpleasant fashion—the process is not as a rule an enjoyable one.

On Sunday, the 29th, being the third Sunday of our visit, when we returned from church and the usual augmented Sabbath meeting of malcontents on the pier we found a gentleman sitting on the bench in the porch awaiting our arrival.

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### CHAPTER III.

SUNDAY had hitherto been an off day with us, and we rather resented this infraction of the rules of the game. I went up to him and addressed him somewhat curtly: "Well, sir, and what can I do for you?"

He looked at me whimsically and said:

"Your name is Oxenham?"

"It is."

"Mine is Sawyer."

"Not Mr. William Henry Sawyer, Esq., of the home office?"

"Yes," he said, smiling at the evidently recognized formula.

"I understood you only came down in May and October."

"So I do generally; but, seeing that the cottage is mine, I suppose I have the privilege of coming whenever I choose."

"The cottage is yours?" I said in surprise.

"Undoubtedly. I bought it and its contents five years ago, and I run down whenever the spirit moves me."

I sat silent, looking at him.

"But if the cottage is yours," I said at last, "how came that little scoundrel?"

"That's just what I have come down to find out," he said.

"Now tell me, Mr. Oxenham, from whom did you take the cottage?"

"From Mr. Joseph Scorer."

"William, you mean, but that is a detail."

"Joseph," said I, "Stay. I'll show you my agreement." And I went inside and got it.

"Joseph," he said, with knitted brow as he perused the document, and after a pause: "Then what the deuce has become of William? What kind of a man was he?"

"Small, sharp, brown man, with one clubfoot."

He nodded.

"Which foot?" he asked.

I had to cast back my thoughts.

"Left," I said at last.

"No; right," said he.

"Left. I am quite sure of it."

He tapped the folded paper against his hand and said:

"One of us is wrong. Scorer has been in my service for fifteen years, and I ought to know."

"Suppose we ask my wife if she remembers."

I called her and put the question.

"His left foot was the lame one," she said after a thoughtful pause. "I can see him standing there"—She said it so decidedly that we involuntarily turned to look, but he was not there except in her memory. "And it was his right shoulder that humped up. Yes; I am quite sure of it."

"This is very curious," said Mr. Sawyer. "I am afraid there is something wrong. Besides, Scorer never could have done such a thing. He was as honest as the day."

"And yet he let this cottage sixteen times over to sixteen different parties, and I have had the privilege, such as it is, of holding the fort against them all."

"I can't believe William Scorer would do such a thing," he said, looking at us with eyes full of puzzled suspicion, as though he was not quite sure whether I had told him all I knew of the matter.

"Joseph," said I.

He tapped his foot impatiently, and we lapsed into silence.

An idea struck me suddenly.

"Is there a Joseph Scorer as well as a William?" I asked. He looked at me abstractedly.

"There was a brother," he said at last, "and, if I remember rightly, a twin brother, but I have not heard of him for years. I do not think I ever saw him. I have an idea he went to the bad."

Our eyes met and held one another, and my thoughts crossed his.

"What do you suspect, Mr. Oxenham?" he asked.

"I suspect that I met Joseph, and you know William," I said.

"But I left William in charge here."

"And I found Joseph."

"Then where is William?"

"William is the missing link. Find him, and we get to the bottom of the matter."

"Yes; that sounds common sense. Now, where is William?"

That was by no means an easy question to answer. Mr. Joseph Scorer could probably have told us, but as the discovery of William was put the first step toward the discovery of Joseph that fact did not advance us.

The solution of the matter came about quite by accident, as many another has done.

As there was a spare bedroom in the cottage, the least we could do was to put it at Mr. Sawyer's disposal if he cared to make use of it. He accepted the offer and turned out to be a very pleasant and genial companion.

The tide next morning did not serve well for bathing till about an hour after breakfast. Then Sawyer and I and some of the youngsters went in.

It was one of those absolutely still mornings when the water is as smooth as oil and you can hear the beat of the steamers' paddles miles away and when you shout it is like shouting inside a bell. We were all swimming and paddling about, enjoying ourselves immensely, when I saw the three little fat pugs and the three old ladies coming along the beach path to take their regular wistful morning look at the cottage where they ought to have been living and were not.

Then from behind the cottage came a great tumult, the noise of many voices mingled with groans and laughter, and there swept round the side of it a mob of people, who came to a stand on the little green plot in front.

We were still wondering what was the meaning of it when Amelia Blatt, our servant, came tearing down the sands toward us, holding on to her square inch of cap with one hand and to her flying skirts with the other.

"They want you up there!" she panted.

"Who are they and what do they want?"

"It's all them folks he let the house to, and they've got 'im."

And as we made for the shore Amelia, who was a very modest girl, fled precipitately up the beach.

"Hey, Milly!" I shouted. "Bring us down a couple of those big bath towels."

Amelia made no answer, but presently the big bath towel met us under the arms of a small boy. We twisted our ordinary towels apron-wise over our dripping bathing suits and draped the big bath towels gracefully over our shoulders and then stalked as majestically as circumstances permitted toward the noisy crowd, which resolved itself into its component elements as we drew near.

The outer fringe consisted of excited and irrepressible small boys of the town, who scampered round and round, shouting and dancing and cuffing one another in sheer enjoyment of living and the knowledge that something un-

usual was on foot. Inside them stood a number of the town loafers, all facing in toward the center of the ring and laughing and making jocular remarks to one another. Closer in still came an excited circle of our friends, who, like the old ladies, ought to have been living in the cottage, but were not.

The irascible old gentleman was there, purple in the face and deeding right and left. The solicitor was there, with a slightly anticipatory look in his face. The strong man was there and looked as if he wanted to break something.

And closer in than all these, forming a solid bodyguard of white flannels and laughing faces and brier pipes, were our young friends from Oxford.

The three little old ladies, with their pugs in their arms, crept round the revolving outskirts of the crowd and joined my wife, who stood wondering in the doorway, and began timidly questioning her as to the meaning of the uproar.

Mr. Sawyer and I elbowed our way through the crowd, and the bodyguard opened to let us into the circle.

In the center stood a little, trembling, meek, brown eyed, crooked man.

"Scorer!" said I. "By all that's wonderful!"

"William!" said Sawyer.

"Jos— No, by Jove; it is the other leg!"

"Now, William," said Mr. Sawyer, "what is the meaning of all this?"

The crooked little man's eyes brightened when he saw Mr. Sawyer.

"Mr. Sawyer, sir, I know no more than a babe unborn. I come in by the 10:30, and no sooner hadn't my foot touched the ground than these young gentlemen they gathered round me and began a-arskin' what I meant by it, and then all them others come along. I dunno what's the matter wi' 'em. Seems to me they're all gone crazy."

"Where's Joseph?"

"Why, ain't 'e 'ere? I left him 'ere when I went into hospital, and 'e said 'e'd keep things all shipshape till I come out."

"Where did you find him? I thought he was away?"

"He come to see me just when I were sickenin', Mr. Sawyer, sir, and he promised to keep things all straight and shipshape till I were right again. So I sent off the wife to her folks, and then Joe he took me along to the hospital, and he said he'd keep things all—"

"I see," said Mr. Sawyer. "And how's the wife?"

"She's A1, Mr. Sawyer, sir."

"And the baby?"

"He's a reg'lar little ripper, sir, and as straight as a lath."

There was more ingenuous pride packed into those last five words than any five words ever held before, but the meek brown eyes shone suddenly moist.

One of the Oxford boys started "Three cheers for the baby! Hip, hip, hurrah, rah, rah!" and then they fell naturally into "He's a jolly good fellow!" and yelled it at the top of their voices, while they all joined hands and danced around us till their faces were on fire and all their pipes were out for want of breath to keep them going, and William Scorer's eyes were like to fall out of his head.

They did not quite understand matters, but they saw there had been some mistake, and they were all very healthy and very happy. They could not forget Joseph, but they heartily forgave William for his brother's sins, and they vowed they would not have missed the fun for three times the amount of Joseph's little peculations.

"What's it all mean, Mr. Sawyer, sir?" asked the bewildered William.

"It means this, William—that that scamp of a brother of yours has let



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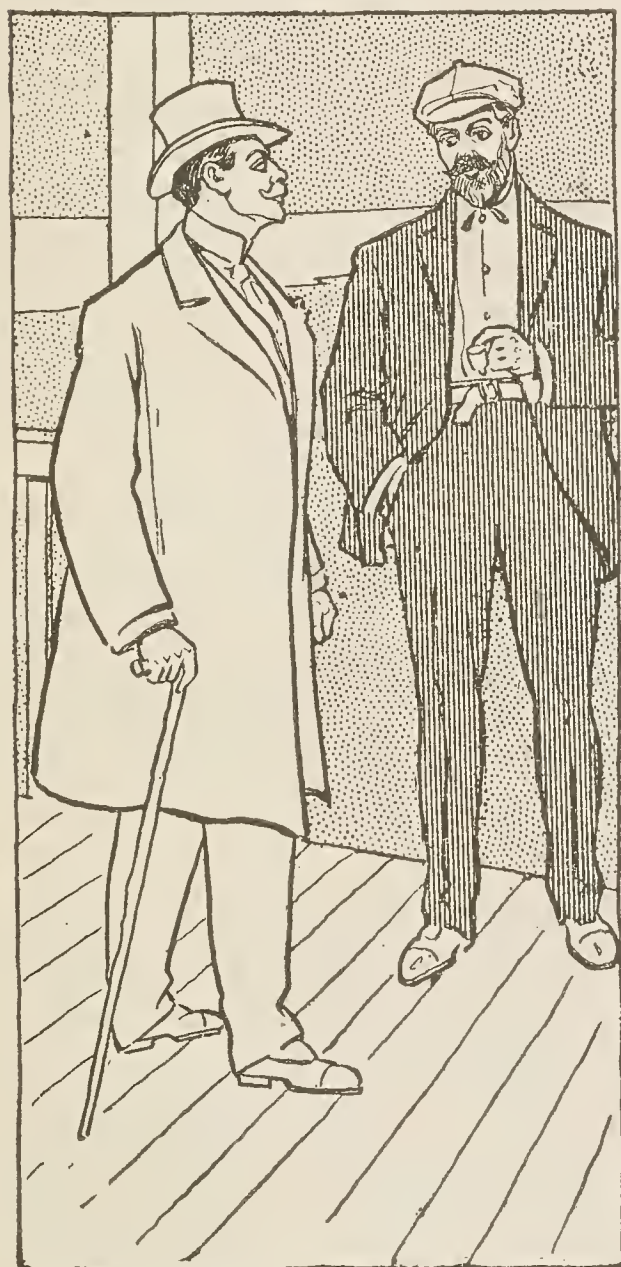


this house of mine some sixteen times over to sixteen different people and all for about the same date and that most of them have paid him a deposit. Hence"— And he waved his hand comprehensively over the throng.

"Nay, sure"— said the little man, and it seemed to me that his stricken wonder was not absolutely untinged with admiration.

There was nothing more to be said or done. Everybody recognized that fact. Joseph was not to be found, and William was not to blame.

The stout little gentleman vowed that he had never heard of such a queer business before. The strong man looked at William and wished he was Joseph for five minutes or so. The solicitor recognized that a case would not lie against little "dot and carry one," as he called him, so he put it in his pipe



"Not Mr. William Henry Sawyer, Esq.?" and smoked it, and by degrees the crowd thinned away and left us in peaceable possession. The last to go were the three little old ladies, and from their manner I should say they were by no means convinced of the existence of William's brother Joseph.

The Oxford boys, by the way, insisted on chairing little William to the Blue Pig down the Wellborough road and tried to induce him to enjoy himself, but as he declined to touch anything stronger than ginger beer there was no great harm done.

Mr. Sawyer stayed a couple of days with us and offered us the cottage free for next August to make up for the annoyances we had suffered, and unless we hear that William Scorer has been taken ill again and that his brother Joseph has come to nurse him we shall accept the invitation.

#### Can You See?

Try it in this interesting game, which any number of persons may play. The objects to be seen are placed on a table in a separate room, or they may be the ordinary articles of furniture in such a room. One of the players should prepare the room or the table. The more articles there are the better. Each player is admitted to this showroom the same length of time, say a half minute, or the whole company may file in slowly and keep in line as they pass around the room and out again, looking carefully at every object. Then all write down as many articles as can be remembered. Each player is allowed

the same length of time to think and write.

These lists are then read aloud by a leader and checked by a correct and complete list previously prepared. The points a player makes equal the number of articles he names correctly. If he names an article that was not in the room, he loses a point. The prize goes to the player who has the most points at the close.

This same game may be played out of doors and each player be given three minutes to write down what he sees from the piazza or wherever he may be sitting.

#### The Flying Frog.

In the East Indies there is a flying frog. Now it does not exactly fly, but its toes are very long and connected by a weblike skin. In jumping from tree to tree (for it is a tree frog) it spreads out its toes and draws deep breaths, which inflate its body with air, and then is able to fly quite a little distance.

The ends of its toes have little concave disks, so that in jumping it can take a firm grasp of a branch.

One of these frogs captured measured about four inches. The skin between the toes of the hind foot covered an area of four and a half inches, while the total area of the four webs was over twelve square inches.

The flying frog is exceedingly beautiful. Its back legs are a rich green, the stomach and toes being yellow, while the skin between the toes is black, decorated with yellow stripes.

#### A Wonderful Spider Web.

In the Pacific ocean there is a group of islands called the New Hebrides, where there is a species of spider that weaves a fine cloth. What do you think of that?

The natives place a slight framework in some dark corner where there are known to be spiders, and the little insects immediately take possession of the frame and use it as a foundation for a web, with marvelous results. One cap made in this way by spiders was over four feet ten inches long and over a foot in diameter at the base.

#### Wall Paper.

The paper on my chamber walls  
Has woods and rocks and waterfalls.  
They are not really there, but I,  
As in my little bed I lie,  
Can find a bird, a house, a tree  
Or anything I wish to see.  
I only need to look about,  
And I can always pick them out.  
Sometimes I find a person's nose,  
And very soon the eyes disclose,  
And then I see a mouth begin,  
And just below there comes a chin.  
And when they're all of them in place  
They form a perfect human face.  
And I discover little boats  
And cows and horses, sheep and goats,  
And when my chamber is not dark  
It seems almost a Noah's ark.  
I'm sure it's very nice to be  
Among such pleasant company  
And feel that I am not alone,  
But in a world that's all my own.  
—Youth's Companion.

#### Pictures With Paper and Paste.

Marian is a little girl who likes to make pictures. Sometimes she makes them with a pencil and sometimes she makes them by sewing with bright-colored zephyrs on dainty white cards.

Mamma gave her a package of these pretty colored circles on her birthday, and ever since then she has been very happy in working with them.

Mamma often makes stories for the pictures, and here is one of them:

Oh, Tabby, Tabby, sleek and fat!  
You seem a very solemn cat  
As on the round mat in the sun  
You sit and blink at every one.

Your coat is thick, so run and play;  
'Twill keep you warm this winter's day.  
And then we hear her soft "Pur, pur,"  
As off she goes, all dressed in fur.

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#### No Good.

Stanley, a boy of five years, had been given a ball and bat by his father and went out to achieve his first success as a ball player.

Presently he came in and said to his father:

"Papa, this old ball bat is no good. I wish you'd take it back and get me another one."

"What is the matter with the bat?" asked the boy's father. "It seems to be all right."

"Well, it isn't," persisted the boy. "It's no good, for it won't hit the ball!" —Lippincott's Magazine.

#### How It Hurts.

Tommy—Smokin' cigarettes is dead sure to hurt yer.

Jimmy—G'on! Where did yer git dat notion?

Tommy—From pop.

Jimmy—Aw! he wuz jist stringin' yer.

Tommy—No, he wasn't stringin' me. He wuz strappin' me. Dat's how I knows it hurts.—Catholic Standard and Times.

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# HOW TO SCIENTIFICALLY REPAIR DAMAGED STAMPS

**T**HERE is a marked difference between a damaged stamp scientifically mended and one which has been repaired by some novice in a careless manner. The former may be worth nearly its catalogue value. The latter, originally in the same mutilated condition, may still be worthless. There are several expert repairers in this country who can take a stamp in very bad condition and so skilfully repair it that it will pass for a perfect specimen. In Europe the art has even surpassed that of this country. A rare Hawaiian 13c stamp carefully pieced together by a European stamp doctor sold shortly for \$1000. Collectors can add to the attractiveness of their collections by following the directions given below.

Cut-round envelopes can be mounted on square pieces of paper of the same color by cutting a hole in the paper of nearly the size of the stamp to be mounted, then scraping the edges on the back of the stamp to the thinness of tissue paper, and gluing the stamp over the hole cut in the square piece of paper. When dry, the stamp should be placed face-up on a stone, or other hard surface, and with the handle of a knife or of a pair of shears the edges of the stamp pressed firmly into the paper on which the stamp is mounted. This pressing should be done after the mending of every stamp, whether envelope or adhesive.

Pieces of perforation taken from sheets of unused stamps or from torn Continentals should be kept to mend stamps with which have lost a part of their perforation. Liquid glue is better than mucilage and a waterproof cement can be bought which will enable the mended stamp to be soaked without coming apart.

Almost every common stamp which is imperfect should be kept to furnish "patches" for valuable stamps with pieces missing. These patches must be of the same shade and color of the stamp to be repaired, so you cannot save too many.

Then a bit of cancellation over a mended stamp which shows where it has been repaired, often covers up the conspicuous spot. A drop of writing ink put on and then blotted off will sometimes suffice. Five cent's worth of printer's ink will cancel a thousand stamps, but it must be used spar-

ingly. When mixed with glycerine it makes an ideal cancelling ink, such as used in the post office.

But when the damage is only a tear, and none of the stamp is missing, a little cement on a piece of paper glued to the back of the stamp will repair it. Then the stamp should be ironed as explained above. For a hasty repair, a piece of hinge or gum paper is moistened and stuck on the back. Most stamps are damaged while being removed from the envelope and the damage is usually a tear; but no matter how long it may be the stamp can, in most cases, be repaired so that its condition will not be detected.

## TO REVEAL WATERMARKS

If you are interested in watermarks you will be unable to detect all of them without some artificial means. The best "revealer" is undoubtedly benzine (or naphtha), a pint of which can be bought for 5c at the paint shop or grocer's. Pour about half a teaspoonful on the stamp and place the stamp face down on a smooth black surface, which hold in various positions until the light strikes it just right and the watermark becomes visible.

Most philatelists use a benzine cup, in place of a flat surface, in which to place the stamp to be examined. A good benzine cup usually costs from twenty five cents to half a dollar, but the following cup will cost you only your time. Take a thin glass tumbler (an old one will do which is nicked or cracked at the top, provided the bottom and the sides within an inch of the bottom are whole) and cut the glass off about an inch from the bottom. This is done by heating the glass carefully and running a wet string around the tumbler where it is to be cut. The moistened string instantly separates the glass. The tumbler should then be smoked black on the bottom and a piece of black paper glued to the bottom on the underneath side. The stamp is placed in the cup and a little benzine poured over the stamp to bring out the watermark.

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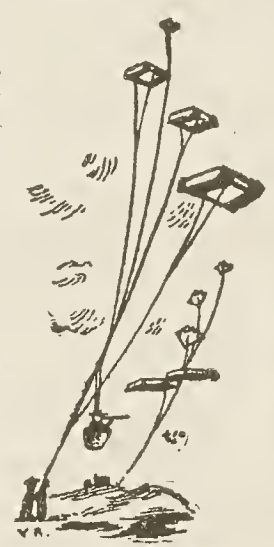
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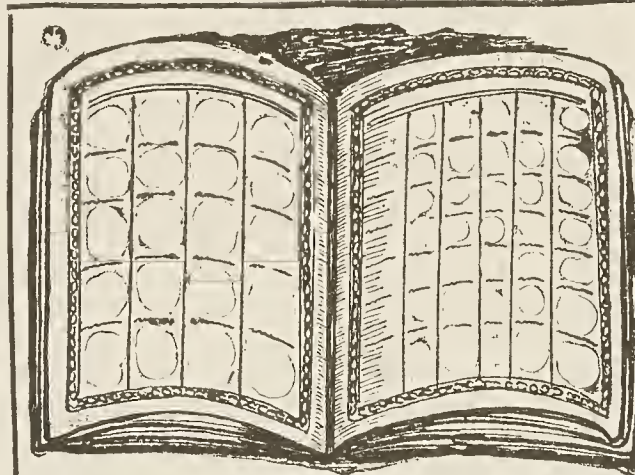
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# DIPLOMACY

[Original.]

"This dispatch is for the secretary of state. It is of immense importance, because it will determine the route of the canal. Should the enemies of that route get possession of it they could defeat the negotiations and possibly insure the success of the other scheme. Get it through safely and you will find your promotion in the secretary's office awaiting you. Fail, and your diplomatic career is ended."

George Gathney, secretary of legation, twenty-three years of age, newly married, left the embassy and hurried home to inform his young wife of his good fortune and make preparations for his journey.

"George, dear," said Alice Gathney, turning on him a pair of expressive eyes, "where do you think it safest to carry the dispatch?"

"In my pocket."

"I'm thinking, George, that your pocket would be just the place any one getting wind of your having it and interested in stealing it would first search."

"What do you say to my hat?"

"I don't like that either."

"Where would you put it?"

"The trouble is, George, you have one defect for a diplomat. You're not reticent. I'm afraid you might get to talking about it and"—

"Come, now, sweetheart," said the young husband with a kiss, "don't treat me like a schoolboy. I'm not quite a fool. I choose to carry it in my suit case, which I shall never let out of my possession. Now do the packing at once and I'll be off."

Alice did as she was bidden, and when all was ready showed her husband a neatly tied package marked "Dispatch" in her own feminine hand. "You see, George," she explained, "this paper on which it is folded will conceal the official printing and address so that no one will recognize it."

"Oh, you stupid!" laughed the husband. "You have hidden the package and revealed it on the cover. What did you mark it 'Dispatch' for?"

"That's to let you know it when you see it. You see, there are other packages, and"—

The words were interrupted by a shower of kisses, with a mumbling of "Dear little fool!" "Crazy idiot!" and similar endearing expressions.

"Goodby, darling!" said the young diplomat before entering the carriage that was to take him to the station. "If it wasn't so sudden I'd take you with me, but you know the baby needs you!"

"Yes, George. Never mind that. Keep your wits about you. Now remember something I'm going to tell you: In your overcoat pocket you'll find a note from me saying one more goodbye for you just before you sail. Promise me you'll read it shortly before the steamer leaves."

"I promise." And with a hug and a long drawn kiss the couple parted.

The steamer sailed at 3 in the morning. George Gathney dined ashore and was preparing to go aboard when a gentleman whom he had seen often at the embassy—indeed, had been employed there for a time—came up to him and presented a note from the minister which read:

This will introduce Mr. Francis Carr, who will explain verbally what I have to say to you through him.

Mr. Carr said that the minister was anxious about the dispatch, as it had been reported to him that those interested in the other route had declared the paper should not go through. Carr asked Gathney where he carried it, and Gathney told him. Then Carr asked him to lock the suit case in his room and he would take him to a place where

he would receive final secret instructions. He did as he was ordered and accompanied the man to a retired spot in a park. Here they waited an hour, when Carr, apparently very much disappointed that no one appeared, returned with Gathney to the hotel. There he bade him adieu, and Gathney went aboard the steamer.

He determined to undress, get into his berth, read his wife's note and go to sleep. Opening his suit case for his night clothes he was startled to find the dispatch package missing.

He fell with a moan on his berth. He knew at once that Carr was a fraud, that his note of introduction had been forged and that he had been enticed away from the hotel in order that a confederate might enter his room and take the dispatch.

As soon as he had regained something of equanimity he began to think. In his distress he needed the comfort of a word from his wife. Opening her note he read:

Goodby, dearie. You'll find the dispatch in your left boot in the suit case.

A plunge for the suit case, a dive for the boot, and, behold, the dispatch!

"Oh, you trump! You little brick! You beautiful! Sharp! Why haven't I you here to give you a million embraces and ten million kisses? You marked it 'Dispatch' so that I would know it, did you? You mean so that the other fellow would know it. How easily he found it and how well arranged your plan that he shouldn't have to search for it, or he might have found the genuine one. If ever a natural born fool was blessed with the shrewdest wife in the world, I'm that fool."

And so he rattled on until he stumbled on his flask, and, pouring out a bumper, drank to "Alice Gathney, queen of diplomacy."

There was dissension in the enemy's camp, and it leaked out that the man who was expected to take the dispatch from the suit case, having been fooled by a woman, became an object of contempt and lost a valuable position. When the story was known at Washington Gathney was made consul general at a post paying \$7,000 a year.

ANNETTE OVERTON.

## Making a Bad Break

What's Bred In the Stockyard Will Out In Society

There I go again with my smiles derived from trade! It's exasperating how home associations will cling to a fellow even after four years of college life! But it's worse when these stockyard phrases bulge out in polite conversation. It's a case of head-on collision with your pride when you are doing your very neatest to impress some sugar cured beauty that you are the flower of the flock, to make a break like a Texas steer. The social circle was pretending to tell ages the other night. When it came my next, a pert little runabout in a cherry waist and a pair of French shoes that must have come down to her from the original Cinderella spoke up:

"And you, Mr. Graham, how old are you?"

"I was established in 187—" I said, with one of my fervid I'll-meet-you-in-the-conservatory-after-the-next-dance glances. But I never added the odd figure. Everybody laughed. Fortunately, they thought I intended a joke. I'll bet you a new hat—if you are still sporting your old friend you need one—that you couldn't say "born." I caught the "established" from you.—From "Letters From a Son to His Self Made Father," by Charles Eustace Merriam.

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